

Dear Mr. Schmitt:

Thank you for your presentation before the Mississippi River Commission during the public meeting held in Hannibal, Missouri, on August 14, 2003. In your statement you expressed concern about sedimentation in Quincy Bay and inquired about the potential use of the auxiliary miter gates.

The Rock Island District of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers is aware of the sedimentation problems in Quincy Bay and continues to work closely with representatives from the Quincy Park District, Congressman Lane Evans' staff, the Illinois Department of Natural Resources, and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service to develop a long-term solution to this problem. On February 28, 2003, the Quincy Park District formally requested the initiation of a Section 1135 project. Rock Island District personnel and Quincy Park District representatives met to determine the feasibility of implementing an environmental restoration project for Quincy Bay under an existing continuing authority program. They discussed potential project features, cost-sharing sponsorship, and challenges associated with securing the necessary approvals and finances to initiate a study for this proposed project.

The auxiliary miter gate bay at Lock and Dam 21 was created with minimal provisions for construction of a second lock. In recent years this gate has been used primarily as an emergency access route during extreme low-water events (loss of navigation pool levels). However, the Upper Mississippi River-Illinois Waterway System Navigation Feasibility Study, hereinafter referred to as the "Navigation Study," includes an alternative that would create a new 1,200-foot lock chamber in this

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auxiliary bay location. For a detailed description of the Navigation Study alternatives and the decision process that will lead to the selection of a final recommended plan, please refer to the July 2003 Status Report found in the "Newsletters and Status Reports" section on the study website located at <http://www2.mvr.usace.army.mil/umr-iwwsns/>. The full economic and environmental evaluations necessary to support a potential recommendation for construction of navigation improvements and implementation of ecosystem restoration measures were completed in October 2003. These tentative alternative plans were

presented at a series of public meetings in October 2003. The September 2003 study newsletter, also provided on the study's website in the "Newsletters and Status Reports" section, provides dates and locations of the public meetings. The final feasibility report is currently scheduled for completion in 2004.

The Mississippi River Commission appreciates your comments and concerns for the aforementioned studies addressing the economic, social, and environmental sustainability of the Upper Mississippi River System. Corps personnel will continue to work closely with their partners and stakeholders to ensure the Upper Mississippi River System continues to be a nationally significant ecosystem and a nationally significant commercial navigation system as designated by Congress.

The Commission appreciates receiving your comments and will be pleased to hear from you at our future public meetings.

Sincerely,

Don T. Riley
Brigadier General, U.S. Army
President Designee, Mississippi
River Commission